

**Camden Budget Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
March 31, 2011**

**PRESENT:** Committee Members: Brian Gasser Meg Sideris, Peter Orne, Delisa Morong, Howard Jones, John Arnold, Randy Stearns, Kristin Bilfulco, Tom Filip, Kimberly Taliadourus, Anita Zeno, Frank Carr, James Heard, Bernard Predham, Rebecca Flanagan, and James Ostrowski, Town Manager Roberta Smith and representatives from provider agencies and community service organizations.

**ABSENT:** Matthew Lewis, Tom Massey, Steve Durrell, Ken Kohl, and Sandy Cox.

Chairman Doudera called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Julia Libby of Camden First Aid Association presented a power point presentation regarding their budget prepared by one of their members William Bentley. A general question and answer period followed each presentation.

**James Heard made a motion to recommend \$10,000 for an appropriation for Camden First Aid Association. Kimberly Taliadourus seconded this motion. The motion passed on a 16-0-1 vote.**

The Committee reviewed each application as submitted by the agencies, and heard from the representatives of the following agencies: American Red Cross, Coastal Transportation, Midcoast Hospitality House, and Midcoast Children's Service (Broadreach Family), American Legion, Camden Rockport Historical Society, Merryspring, and Teen Center. A general question and answer period followed each presentation.

The Committee thanked each representative for attending this evening's meeting.

The Committee then voted to recommend the following appropriations for each agency for the upcoming budget:

**John Arnold made a motion to recommend the following appropriations:**

- a. \$2132 to American Red Cross
- b. \$2650 to Coastal Transportation
- c. \$2500 to Coastal Opportunities (formerly Coastal Workshop)
- d. \$800 to Broadreach (Midcoast Children Services)

**James Heard seconded this motion. The motion passed on a 16-0-1 vote.**

**John Arnold made a motion to recommend the following appropriations:**

- a. \$1200 to American Legion
- b. \$1000 to Camden Historical Society
- c. \$1000 to Merryspring
- d. \$13113 to Teen Center

**Tom Filip seconded this motion. The motion passed on a 15-0-2 vote.**

Manager Smith reported they need to revisit some capital improvement items on page 38 of the

budget. She has concerns with the safety issues regarding the need for drainage, shoreline access and stabilization improvements needed for Laite Beach. She feels this is a higher priority than the Public Landing restroom and the Molyneaux Bridge wing wall repair. The funds for the Molyneaux Road bridge wing walls repair and the Public Landing restroom roof total of \$43,000 could be zeroed out and moved into the Laite Beach Improvements line. The total needed to do Laite Beach is \$165,500 but the most immediate need is more in the neighborhood of \$125,000 so they are working on donations and grant money to get it done. This really needs to get done and it is unfortunate that the budget will not allow us to fund the whole thing.

Another option would be to finance the whole project and use the \$43,000 for a down payment and borrow the remainder of the money from the town's surplus. This would be a discussion or the Select Board.

**John Arnold made a motion to revisit budget and zero out budget line 3004-4209 and 3004-4405 and move the \$43,000 into the new line item 3004-(number has not been assigned yet) for Laite Beach drainage improvements. Randy Stearns seconded this motion. The motion passed on a 16-0-1 vote.**

**James Heard made a request to revisit the library line and add \$10,000 back into Library line giving the library their original request of \$360,000. Meg Sideris seconded this motion.**

Kristin Bifulco stated the library is a unique feature of the town. We should not be taking money away from something that serves the whole town. This to her seems very wrong. The library is a part of the community.

Vice Chair Fillip reminded the committee that a few weeks ago we had an extensive discussion on the library budget and one motion was amended to add \$5000 back to the library and the motion failed on a 2-15-1 vote.

Randy Stearns would like to clarify that that the FY11 Budget amount was \$340,000 and we voted last week to give them \$350,000 so this is already \$10,000 over last year and if we vote to amend that and give them \$360,000 essentially that is a \$20,000 increase which equals a 6% increase over last year.

**Chairman Doudera called for a vote on the motion on the floor. The vote was 6-11-0. The motion fails.**

**Kristin Bilfulco made a motion to move \$10,000 from the Economic Reserve line to the Camden Public Library. Kimberly Taliadouros seconded this motion.**

Manager Smith commented that the Economic Reserve is not set aside each year in particular to spend. Its purpose is to build up for improvements such as a parking garage or something like that. We as a town should not be taking money from capital investments and moving to an operating budget. The question the budget committee needs to ask is can the town afford to add \$10,000 to its operating budget. We have squeezed more than we can call already. We consistently cut the town budget; we eliminated dispatch, a position from the Finance Office. It has been difficult to keep the services that are expected by the town.

Rusty Brace, President of the Library Trustees, stated the library budget is very tight and adding another \$10,000 will still make it very tight. If the town does have \$10,000 in an Economic Reserve that money is needed to make a better library or make the library stay the way it is.

**Tom Filip made a motion to call for a vote and cease the debate. Randy Stearns seconded this motion. The motion passed on a 14-3-0 vote.**

**Kristin Bilfulco made a motion to increase the library budget by \$5000 for a new total of \$355,000. James Heard seconded this motion.**

**Delisa Morong made a motion to amend the motion on the floor by taking \$5,000 out of the Public Works Building maintenance (specifically for the painting of the sand/salt shed) and allocate it to the library for a total budget for the Camden Public Library for \$355,000. Randy Stearns seconded this motion. The motion passed on a 9-8-0 vote.**

Kristin Bilfulco withdrew her motion on the floor.

**Randy Stearns made a motion to reduce the Opera House Auditorium from \$198,600 to \$171,100 and allocate the \$27,500 to Laite Beach Improvements. Kimberly Taliadouros seconded this motion.**

Discussion, Randy Stearns stated his recommendation is to put the Opera House Manager back to part time. The budget reflects adding more money to the budget for salary and benefits to make this position full time when it has been part time.

Opera House Committee member Kate Bates was present and remarked that Kerry Hadley, Opera House Manager has basically been working full time without the luxury of benefits. Kerry has been here 10 years, has generated more income for the Opera House. The Opera House is a highly lucrative piece of the town and we need to recognize the actual hours put in by Kerry Hadley.

Committee member John Arnold stated he was not comfortable with cutting the budget for this purpose, he feels a full time presence is needed in the Opera House.

Committee member Kimberly Taliadouros stated she did not feel the town needed to fund this extra money for the Opera House when it routinely loses money as indicated by previous budgets when we can't find \$10,000 for the library or fund a safety project (Laite Beach).

Rebecca Flanagan commented the restaurants are busy, and we have already gone over this. This is someone's livelihood who has worked here for 10 years without benefits and she does not feel it is appropriate that the budget committee take away someone's livelihood.

James Ostrowski stated the Opera House has huge value for the inns, shops, and stores. Our biggest income producer is from events hosted by the Opera House. Running the Opera House is big responsibility and he is in favor of keeping what we already voted on.

Delisa Morong stated she have been involved with Camden Civic Theater since the early 90's. A lot of things are done by volunteerism. We need to keep in mind the times the Auditorium is open and being used by the town when it is not open it is not bringing in revenue.

Kristin Bilfulco stated the town is not run like a corporation. It's whether we need it or not and with increased hours the town will receive some benefit from it.

Randy Stearns stated we already approved a \$198,600 budget for Opera House and \$20,000 for a reserve line for the Opera House, why do we need to keep two of these venues open (Strom at High School) and the Opera House.

James Ostrowski stated he keeps hearing the Opera House does not bring revenue, he has to disagree. We may lose money on the surface but essentially what we are trying to do here is get money back for the Laite Beach project that we took away from other lines.

Chairman Doudera stated he stands by the Town Manager's recommendation; we are not a personnel board and called for a vote for the motion on the floor.

The motion failed on a 2-15-0 vote.

**Tom Filip made a motion to adjourn at 9:40 p.m. James Heard seconded this motion. The motion passed on a 17-0-0 vote.**

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Janice L. Esancy  
Recording Secretary